



Good Morning OSI

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*A
visible,
viable,
vanguard
for
Michigan's
educational
community*

Standard & Poor's Benchmarking Institute Held at Wayne RESA

Michael Stewart and Larry Fieber of Standard & Poor's School Evaluation Services facilitated the first Michigan Benchmarking Institute on March 21-22, 2005. A total of 13 school improvement teams comprised of over 50 elementary and middle school teachers, educational supervisors and principals, participated in 12 hours of direct training and professional development during the institute. Special guest consultant, Deb Wahlstrom, provided the participants with in-depth learning about data collection and analysis.

The Institute helps school improvement teams seek out "promising practices" by using Standard & Poor's customized data analysis to identify and collaborate with schools that perform consistently and significantly higher than other schools with similar or greater socioeconomic challenges. Participants from invited schools were highly engaged in learning how the benchmarking process might assist their schools in improving student achievement.

Comments from those who attended include:

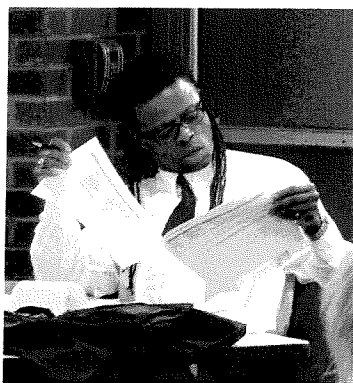


Teachers found much to smile about as they shared their experiences and ideas with one another.

- I felt that the Institute was outstanding! This is the first institute that I have attended and came away w/ pertinent ideas and solutions. The workbook was great.
- One of the best workshops I have attended in my six years of teaching.
- The workbook was easy to follow & filled with information that I will be able to use at my school with the staff. Looking forward to using Standard & Poor's website.
- The workshop provided the "missing piece" to NCLB reform. We keep hearing that we need to "improve." This workshop gave us skills to empower that improvement.
- The workshop was outstanding. I learned a lot. This workshop will allow me to be more manageable [sic], especially if this process works. This workshop is rated one of the #1 workshops in my profession. Outstanding job!
- I thought everything was wonderful. This is the most informative and organized workshop I have ever been to.
- It helps give a base to start targeting areas of improvement.
- I thought you did a very good job and I learned a lot about benchmarking and am ready to begin and share with other staff members. The workbook was laid out nicely and it was easy to follow.
- This was an excellent institute. Keep going.
- I wish more from my school had attended.
- Emphasis on bringing the entire S.I.T. [School Improvement Team] would be helpful.
- I wish we had been able to learn about this last October.
- I liked that we had a workbook and a process to take back with us.
- The workbook seems to be perfect.
- The workbook was easy to follow along with.
- I think it was very good and clear.
- Pages to write and plan were excellent.
- I like the way the workbook looks inviting to use.
- The templates were really helpful.
- I like the easy to read nature and clear guidelines on process for benchmarking.
- The workbooks are strong working tools, providing good reference points.
- Thanks for all the great information!

*"Life is not
dated merely
by years.
Events are
sometimes the
best calendars."*

Benjamin Disraeli



Teachers use Standard & Poor's customized data analysis to identify benchmarking partners ... schools they would like to partner with to study their "promising practices" in curriculum, instruction, and assessment.



Seated at the table are representatives from Detroit's O.W. Holmes Elementary School, as they assess their school's strengths and potential areas for improvement. Teachers and principals from other schools look on as the process is demonstrated.

The next Institute is scheduled for April for schools in the Saginaw area. Other Institute's are being planned and information on dates, locations will be made available as soon as possible. The Institute is funded by the State of Michigan, and is coordinated in partnership with the Michigan Elementary and Middle School Principals Association, the Michigan Department of Education's Office of School Improvement, and the Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators.

Many thanks to Jane Jacobs, Charlotte O'Brien, and Bob Butler who attended the Institute on behalf of OSI.